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Subject: spiritual advisor for patrick murphy
Date: February 28, 2019 at 2:09 PM
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sharon --

you may be aware that i represent patrick murphy, who is scheduled to be executed on march 28. i am writing about the issue of a spiritual advisor.

murphy is a buddhist. his spiritual advisor is reverend hui-yong shih. murphy would like hui-yong to be present with him in the execution chamber because murphy's faith teaches that, in order to enter into what he understands to be the "pure land," he must focus on the buddha at the time of death, and reverend shih's presence in the chamber would make that possible.

murphy's religion also dictates that the body of a deceased person not be disturbed for seven days after the person has died. we realize asking this of TDCJ is a long shot (but i am nevertheless asking anyway), but, as a fallback position, reverend shih has advised murphy it would suffice to honor this tradition for his body not to be disturbed for seven minutes after he is killed. murphy's believes that the chaplain who is ordinarily present in the execution chamber during executions holds the toe of the person who is being killed until he dies. however, because being touched at the time he dies would violate his belief that his body should not be disturbed, murphy also requests that the chaplain, if present, not touch him.

i am happy to arrange a time to chat about these requests. i think they are reasonable and hope we can address them administratively rather than through litigation.

my usual thanks for your attention,

-- drd

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